

SENATE BILL 1443

By Green

AN ACT to name the new Tennessee State Veterans Home in Montgomery County in honor of Brigadier General (Retired) Wendell H. Gilbert, United States Army.

WHEREAS, many fine and honorable traditions have arisen from the deep wellspring of honor and bravery possessed by Tennesseans, but there is no finer tradition than that which gave Tennessee its nickname; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of the Volunteer State have, throughout the years, willingly forsaken the comforts and securities of inaction by taking up arms against the enemies of this great Nation, risking their lives and leaving their loved ones behind in order to honorably safeguard the freedoms and liberties guaranteed to all citizens of these United States and vanquishing those who threaten our way of life; and

WHEREAS, one such courageous Volunteer is Brigadier General (Retired) Wendell H. Gilbert, United States Army, a West Point graduate and Vietnam veteran who was born, raised, and educated in Clarksville and Montgomery County; and

WHEREAS, Brigadier General Gilbert served with distinction as an advisor to the 6th Infantry Regiment, 2nd AVRN Division; Commander of the 2/40th FA BN; Commander of the 3/319 FA BN, 173 ABN Division; and Chief of Staff of the 101st ABN Division, ADC 1st Armored Division; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to honors and accolades, Brigadier General Gilbert has received the Legion of Merit with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster; Bronze Star with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster; Meritorious Service Medal with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster; Air Medal; Army Commendation Medal with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster; National Defense Service Medal; Vietnam Service Medal; Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Silver Star and with Bronze Star; and 4 Overseas Bars; and

WHEREAS, after retiring from the U.S. Army as a Brigadier General, Wendell Gilbert served his fellow Tennesseans as Chief of Staff for Governor Don Sundquist, Tennessee Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, Deputy to Governor Sundquist for Homeland Security, and Austin Peay University Vice-President for Development and University Relations for 17 years; and

WHEREAS, Brigadier General Gilbert has remained active as a citizen and has given back to his community through service as President of the Clarksville Area Chamber of Commerce, President of the Tennessee-Kentucky Chapter of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA), President of the Clarksville Rotary Club, founding chairman of Citizens of Fort Campbell, charter member of Leadership Clarksville Board of Directors, and a member of the AUSA National Resolution Committee; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his bachelor's degree from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Brigadier General Gilbert holds a master's degree from George Washington University and has attended the National War College; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County has acquired real estate for the future development of a Tennessee State Veterans Home in Montgomery County, and on May 17, 2013, a groundbreaking was held for such Tennessee State Veterans Home; and

WHEREAS, the new Tennessee State Veterans Home in Montgomery County will provide an invaluable resource for the citizens of Montgomery County; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee State Veterans Home Board has voted unanimously to recommend the naming of the Tennessee State Veterans Home in Montgomery County in honor of Brigadier General (Retired) Wendell H. Gilbert, United States Army; and

WHEREAS, on July 8, 2013, the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners also approved naming such building in Brigadier General Gilbert's honor; and

WHEREAS, Brigadier General (Retired) Wendell H. Gilbert served with great courage and gallantry throughout his career, ever willing to sacrifice his personal safety and concerns for the enduring freedom of his country and the preservation of the ideals that forged this great

Nation, and he deserves proper recognition from the State of Tennessee and Montgomery County; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the new Tennessee State Veterans Home in Montgomery County is hereby named in honor of Brigadier General (Retired) Wendell H. Gilbert, United States Army, in recognition of his life of honor, valor, commitment, and purpose.

SECTION 2. The Department of Military shall cause to be erected suitable signs or affixed suitable markers designating such edifice as the "Brigadier General Wendell H. Gilbert Tennessee State Veterans Home".

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.